

# **EXHIBIT 1**

## THE HONORABLE JAMAL N. WHITEHEAD

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON  
AT SEATTLE

PLAINTIFF PACITO; PLAINTIFF ESTHER;  
PLAINTIFF JOSEPHINE; PLAINTIFF SARA;  
PLAINTIFF ALYAS; PLAINTIFF MARCOS;  
PLAINTIFF AHMED; PLAINTIFF RACHEL;  
PLAINTIFF ALI; HIAS, INC.; CHURCH  
WORLD SERVICE, INC.; and LUTHERAN  
COMMUNITY SERVICES NORTHWEST.

*Plaintiffs,*

V.

DONALD J. TRUMP, in his official capacity as President of the United States; MARCO RUBIO, in his official capacity as Secretary of State; KRISTI NOEM, in her official capacity as Secretary of Homeland Security; ROBERT F. KENNEDY, JR., in his official capacity as Secretary of Health and Human Services,

### *Defendants.*

I, Emily Russ, hereby declare pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746 as follows:

1. I am the Director of the HIAS-managed Resettlement Support Center in Austria (“RSC-Austria”), one of seven overseas Resettlement Support Centers. I have held this role at RSC-Austria since 2008, and I have worked at HIAS since 2007.

DECL. OF EMILY RUSS  
(No. C25-255 JNW)

**Perkins Coie LLP**  
1201 Third Avenue, Suite 4900  
Seattle, Washington 98101-3099  
Phone: +1.206.359.8000  
Fax: +1.206.359.9000

1       2. The facts set forth in this declaration are based on my personal knowledge, my  
2 conversations with my staff, and the information kept in the ordinary course of business at RSC-  
3 Austria.

4       3. I make this declaration to set forth the impact on USRAP cases following the State  
5 Department's termination of RSC-Austria on February 26, 2025.

6       **I. Termination of RSC-Austria on February 26, 2025**

7       4. RSC-Austria received funding from the U.S. Department of State through a  
8 cooperative agreement between HIAS and the Bureau of Population, Resettlement and Migration  
9 (PRM) (the "cooperative agreement"). This cooperative agreement, which had an end date of  
10 September 2025, funded the administration of RSC-Austria, which includes three different sites:  
11 a main office in Vienna and suboffices in Croatia and Israel. This cooperative agreement provided  
12 RSC-Austria with \$8,608,000 in budgeted funding for the current fiscal year, with \$6,542,068 in  
13 funding obligated through the end of June.

14       5. HIAS has operated RSC-Austria for 24 years, since 2001. And prior to 2001, HIAS,  
15 along with other agencies, managed refugee resettlement from Austria under a different  
16 arrangement—since 1980.

17       6. RSC-Austria works with two distinct populations: vulnerable asylum seekers in  
18 Israel and religious minorities from Iran.

19       7. This RSC is responsible for receiving applications and preparing the documents  
20 necessary for resettlement to the United States for both of these populations. It also coordinates  
21 refugee interviews with U.S. government officials for applicants in Austria, Croatia, and Israel,  
22 and it assists approved refugees with medical examinations, U.S. placement paperwork, and  
23 cultural orientation training for all caseloads.

24       8. All the funds PRM committed to HIAS to operate RSC-Austria under the  
25 cooperative agreement were halted through Notices of Suspension and "stop-work orders" that  
26 HIAS received from PRM on January 24, 2025. (ECF 15-24 ¶¶ 44-45).

1       9. On Wednesday, February 26, 2025, HIAS received a Notice of Termination stating  
2 that PRM was terminating the cooperative agreement for RSC-Austria, effective “immediately”  
3 and directing us to “stop all work on the program and not incur any new costs” after February 26.  
4 The Notice of Termination is annexed to this declaration as Attachment A.

5       **II. Devastating and Compounding Impacts of Funding Suspension and Termination**

6       10. RSC-Austria plays an integral role in administering the USRAP and provides the  
7 vast majority of the person-power necessary to process this set of refugee cases. Specifically, the  
8 Department of State has three employees (PRM Program Officer, PRM Regional Refugee  
9 Coordinator, and PRM Regional Refugee Coordinator Assistant) who provide direct oversight for  
10 RSC-Austria. They oversaw (until recently) the work of the RSC-Austria staff of 51 employees  
11 (includes recently terminated staff) who were involved in processing and providing support to such  
12 cases.

13       11. Without the RSC staff, there is no one to do the core work of actually processing  
14 approved refugee cases to completion so that they can travel to safety in the United States.

15       12. I understand that the Government provided a status report to the Court on March  
16 10, 2025, stating that USCIS has resumed rendering decisions on refugee cases. But without RSC  
17 support, approved refugee cases cannot be processed to completion. RSC staff is responsible for  
18 nearly all of the labor intensive work that follows a USCIS decision, including: 1) confirming  
19 security checks are clear, 2) coordinating pre-travel medical exams, 3) ensuring medical exam  
20 results are received and refugees are cleared to travel, 4) organizing the assurance process with  
21 domestic resettlement agencies, 5) flagging cases to IOM as ready to book travel, and 6) preparing  
22 the documents necessary for refugees to enter the United States.

23       13. I also understand that the Government, at the end of February, terminated the  
24 cooperative agreements of all refugee resettlement agencies in the United States to provide  
25 reception and placement services. Without domestic resettlement agencies providing those  
26 services, I do not believe refugees are permitted to travel to the United States. These are the

1 agencies that provide assurances committing to support the resettlement of refugees after their  
2 arrival in the United States. Under prior policy and practice, until the RSC receives an assurance  
3 from a resettlement agency to support a particular refugee, the RSC is not permitted to finalize  
4 processing, including directing the refugee to IOM for travel arrangements and organizing travel  
5 documents.

6 **III. RSC-Austria's Ready-to-Travel Clients**

7 14. Of the USRAP cases in which RSC-Austria was involved, 14 individuals were  
8 ready to travel to the US on January 22, 2025. None of these cases have moved forward since  
9 January 22, 2025.

10 15. In addition, every month there are 135 visas available for Iranian religious  
11 minorities to permit them to travel to Croatia and Austria for USRAP processing. Every month  
12 the USRAP is not operational, we are not able to utilize that month's visa allocation and 135  
13 refugees in danger because of their religious beliefs lose the opportunity to travel to safety in the  
14 United States. And there is tremendous need for those visas, as demonstrated by the very  
15 substantial backlogs. RSC Austria maintains a pipeline of nearly 15,000 individuals in all stages  
16 of processing, in Israel and Iran. There are approximately 14,000 members of Iranian religious  
17 minorities who are registered for the USRAP and are waiting in Iran for authorization to travel to  
18 Croatia and Austria.

19 16. For travel-ready individuals, the RSC's next steps would be to assess if individuals  
20 are still eligible for travel, re-request travel bookings from IOM, schedule pre-embarkation  
21 medical checks with the panel physician, coordinate departure support at airport check-in  
22 (including coordination with Israeli Ministry of Interior for the Israel caseload to prepare exit  
23 permissions and procedures), and re-confirm refugee placements in the US with the receiving  
24 resettlement agencies.

25 17. As far as I am aware, there has been no activity on any cases since this Court's  
26 February 25, 2025 preliminary injunction.

1       18. RSC-Austria is unable to carry out these next steps for several reasons.

2       19. First and foremost, we are not permitted to continue work because there is a stop-  
3 work order in effect. *See supra ¶¶ 8-9.* This means that refugees who would have been processed  
4 through RSC-Austria cannot travel to the United States. It is my understanding that other RSCs  
5 are also subject to stop work orders, and as a result, refugees who would have been processed  
6 through them cannot travel to the United States as well.

7       20. Second, PRM has cut off RSCs' access to the START database tool—the case  
8 management system maintained by PRM's Refugee Processing Center—where all case  
9 processing functions are documented and where all information regarding a refugee's readiness  
10 and needs for travel are stored. RSC Austria was cut off from the START database in February  
11 when our cooperative agreement was suspended. Reports and data from START are necessary  
12 for RSC staff to determine if individuals remain eligible for travel.

13       21. Third, even if the stop work order were not in effect, the significant reductions in  
14 staffing in all three of the RSC-Austria's offices mean that RSC-Austria no longer has the staffing  
15 capacity to communicate with refugees in a language they understand, to request flights for  
16 refugees to the US, to prepare the documents necessary for entry to the US, to schedule required  
17 refugee medical exams, to prepare necessary case management reports, and to fulfill other  
18 obligations outlined in the cooperative agreement. The RSC has additionally reduced certain IT  
19 contracts and disabled email accounts for dismissed staff.

20       22. Because of the suspension and termination, RSC-Austria and its suboffices have  
21 been severely impacted. In Vienna, 26 staff members, which is over 80% of the staff roster, will  
22 be terminated at different times after March 15, 2025 depending on their length of service. Without  
23 further instructions from PRM to recommence refugee processing, those remaining in the Vienna  
24 office will be unable to resume any PRM-funded work.

1       23. We are in the process of closing out our RSC site in Croatia after laying off 10 of  
2 the 11 employees. To resume any case processing there, we would need to rehire but do not have  
3 the funds to do so.

4       24. PRM instructions and funding are also urgent for the RSC site in Israel. Two  
5 employees will be terminated on March 14, 2025 if the Notice of Termination stands and one  
6 employee will be terminated in May, leaving only one RSC employee in the Israel sub-office.  
7 When the Department of State, per this Court's preliminary injunction order, restarts the USRAP,  
8 we would need to rehire staff, but without the PRM cooperative agreement funds, we would not  
9 have the money to do so.

10      25. Also, there are 123 cases, an estimated 400 individuals, who have already been  
11 interviewed by USCIS and need to be prepared for travel to the United States by RSC Austria, but  
12 no work can be done without further instructions and funding from PRM.

13 **IV. Conclusion**

14      26. Without immediate relief to undo the Termination Notice, the populations served  
15 by RSC-Austria will suffer immeasurable harm. The Court's order enjoining the ban on refugee  
16 admission will be extraordinarily difficult to enforce without the work of RSC-Austria, and RSCs  
17 more generally, and the particularly vulnerable refugees we work with will be further and  
18 indefinitely delayed from entering the United States.

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6 I declare under the penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States of America that

7 the foregoing is true and correct.

8 EXECUTED this 11th day of March, 2025, at Vienna, Austria.

9   
10 Emily Russ

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DECL. OF EMILY RUSS- 7  
(No. C25-255 JNW)

Perkins Coie LLP  
1201 Third Avenue, Suite 4900  
Seattle, Washington 98101-3099  
Phone: +1.206.359.8000  
Fax: +1.206.359.9000

# **Attachment A**

## **(to Declaration of Emily Russ)**



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**Termination Notification**

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**NOTICE OF TERMINATION**

February 26, 2025

HIAS Inc.  
[REDACTED]

1300 Spring Street Suite 500  
Silver Spring, MD 201910-3634

REF: SPRMCO24CA0354 RSC Austria FY25

Dear [REDACTED]:

The U.S. Department of State hereby notifies the recipient that this award is immediately terminated as of February 26, 2025. This award no longer effectuates agency priorities and is terminated in accordance with the U.S. Department of State Standard Terms and Conditions, 2 CFR 200.340, and/or Award Provisions as applicable.

Effective immediately upon receipt of this Notice of Termination, the Recipient must stop all work on the program and not incur any new costs after the effective date cited above. Payment requests for legitimate costs incurred prior to this notification are allowable. If your award is already in suspended status, payment requests for legitimate costs incurred prior to the effective date of the Notice of Suspension are allowable. The Recipient must cancel as many outstanding obligations as possible.

Final reports will be due in accordance with the Award Provisions.

Sincerely,